## TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

April 8, 2003 LB 303

motorcycle crash victims have private healthcare coverage, so that the majority of the costs are paid by government, mostly in the form of Medicaid. That is the place that I think we move away from it being just a private decision about how you're going to manage your own life, because we, as representatives of the people, end up making decisions about spending money that would not need to have taken place had the person who was making decision used a helmet. that Because there's compelling from Traffic the National Highway Administration, and yesterday Senator Byars passed around an article about a link where you can get a lot...an evaluation of all the research that's been done, and there's very compelling information that helmets have an impact on the cost per person So it's not a question about whether, under certain circumstances, this individual should have the right to ride without a helmet. It's, what is going to happen in our societal response to that person if they become injured? And if they don't have...if almost 50 percent of them do not have private health insurance, what is going to happen? The long-term healthcare insurance are very high. The costs for And I think Senator Smith will probably speak very strongly against this. The reason that they're high is because if someone is injured, especially a young person, and spends the rest of their life in a disabled state, the costs are enormous for keeping that person in residential care. That's the reason that long-term health insurance costs. But the option, the alternative is that we are going to make a decision today that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data would say is going to cost the state of Nebraska a lot of money in Medicaid costs. Now, it's fine if we want to make a decision about personal choice. But we are going to have to acknowledge to our citizens what we are doing to our Medicaid costs. And I believe that even though this is going to make it a fairly high bar for people to make the choice to ride without a helmet, I think it's a bar that responsible, from our standpoint, of protecting the majority of the people in the state who are paying the bills. And with that, I will yield the rest of my time...well, I was going to yield the rest of my time to Senator Brashear. Okay. Senator...I will yield the rest of my time to Senator Jensen.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Brown. Senator Jensen, you